

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph 5 beginning on page 3, line 29 with the following amended paragraph:

In principle, the auxiliary support can be designed so as to take over the function of holding the top bearing part at the ~~base~~basic bearing part during the fracture separation process. However, it may be expedient in the case of certain materials and workpiece forms to arrange main supports acting from outside in the fracture separation station, which will resiliently act upon the top bearing part during the fracture separation process.

Please replace paragraph 6 beginning on page 3, line 35 with the following amended paragraph:

In principle, the workpiece can indeed be fed directly to the screwing station after the fracture separation process. However, it is ~~expedient for the base~~provided according to the invention that ~~the basic~~ bearing part and the top bearing part ~~to~~will undergo a release and cleaning process on the fracture plane after the fracture separation process.

Please replace paragraph 2 beginning on page 4, line 3 with the following amended paragraph:

It is advantageous for the release process to be carried out by vibrating or impacting action. A vibration or impacting device, which ~~engages~~catches the top bearing part ~~in a rapid sequence~~ and brings it in contact with the ~~base~~basic bearing part on the fracture plane ~~in a rapid sequence~~, can be provided for this purpose in the relevant station. The metal particles generated by the fracture separation process, which are present in loose form on the fracture surface, can thus be removed. This process can be assisted by a blowing, suctioning or brush device.

Amendment dated September 19, 2006

First Preliminary Amendment

Please replace paragraph 3 beginning on page 4, line 10 with the following amended paragraph:

During the phase of vibrating or impacting action, the ~~location of the top bearing part must be accurately fixed in-parallel to the fracture plane with respect to the base basic bearing part, while at the same time being held in a loose manner in-a direction perpendicular vertically~~ to the fracture surface. It is expedient in this regard to provide fixing means having fixing and holding pins which can be inserted into the bores for the screws. During this process, the auxiliary supports are retracted for the cleaning process of blowing, suctioning or brushing off so that the top bearing part can be moved away relatively far from the base bearing part to even form a gap, without the connection between these two parts being thereby suspended and thus the above-mentioned allocation errors possibly occurring.